



# SUBDISTRICT FILE

## United States Department of the Interior

### MINING ENFORCEMENT AND SAFETY ADMINISTRATION

1460 MAIN STREET  
PRINCETON, WEST VIRGINIA 24740

Coal Mine Health and  
Safety District 4

September 1, 1976

#### Memorandum

To: Jack F. McManus, Subdistrict Manager *J.F.M.*

From: S. E. Gaspersich, Coal Mine Safety Specialist

Subject: Report of investigation of non-fatal coal outburst accident,  
Beatrice Mine, Beatrice Coal Company, Keen Mountain,  
Buchanan County, Virginia, July 24, 1976

A coal outburst occurred about 10:20 a.m., July 24, 1976, in the face area in No. 3 entry No. 9 unit section in the subject mine and caused injuries to three workmen. Fred Roberts, continuous-mining machine operator, and Randy Owens, timberman, were bruised; David Pinion, timberman, sustained a broken collar bone, lacerations on his legs, and body bruises. All were hospitalized in the Clinch Valley Clinic Hospital, Richlands, Virginia; however, Roberts was released immediately after a medical examination.

The writer was informed soon after the accident occurred and the investigation was made on the same day. The following participated in the investigation and/or subsequent conference:

#### Beatrice Pocahontas Company

Thurston Strunk	President
John Turyn	General Manager
Charles Jessee	Assistant General Manager
Allen Williamson	Superintendent
Claude Schweingruber	Mine Foreman
Walter S. Browning	Assistant Mine Foreman
Harold Stanley	Safety Director
Carnie Browning	Safety Engineer
Cecil Keene	Section Foreman
James Gilley	Consultant

#### Virginia Division of Mines and Quarries

Philip Willis	District Inspector
Leon Yates	District Inspector

Recorded  
Code: *206*  
Date: *9/7/76*  
Asst. Trans Date: *9/22/76*

Mining Enforcement and Safety Administration

James R. Baker  
S. E. Gaspersich  
Robert E. Nesbit

Coal Mine Inspector  
Coal Mine Safety Specialist  
Coal Mine Inspector

The outburst occurred during a mining cycle after Roberts maneuvered the continuous-mining machine preparatory to the arrival of a shuttle car. Pinion was acting as Roberts' helper and Owens was on hand to relieve the shuttle car operator. Both were positioned along the inby rib outby Roberts when the outburst occurred. Pinion and Owens were flung against the brattice along the opposite rib and Roberts was pinned at his control position. Roberts extricated himself; however, Pinion and Owens were attended by Cecil Keene, section foreman, who was nearest the scene and organized rescue efforts, first-aid treatment, and transportation to the surface.

The No. 3 Pocahontas coalbed in this area averaged about 53 inches in thickness. Overburden ranged from 1,900 to 2,100 feet in thickness. The immediate and main roof was firm massive sandy shale. The immediate floor was firm dense shale about 30 inches in thickness which heaved and fractured soon after entries and crosscuts were developed.

Entries and crosscuts were driven 18 feet wide on 70-foot centers. No. 4 entry was driven parallel to a bleeder entry and holed into the gob along a zone characterized by an increase in the thickness of the coalbed and a marked change in the floor grade.

Manifestations of an impending outburst were not observed by the writer on July 22 and 23, 1976, when mining was confined to advancing No. 4 entry and right crosscut. In accordance with recommendations, the right crosscut was completed before mining in No. 4 entry was resumed and initiated in No. 3 entry. The consensus of officials and workmen was that no unusual incident was discerned while mining progressed in No. 3 entry.

During the conference, recommendations were made to complete the development by reducing entry centers to 35 feet and following the sequence requiring the inby entry to be advanced and the first crosscut driven before the next entry is started. These recommendations were incorporated in the requirements preparatory to resumption of mining.

*S. E. Gaspersich (m)*  
S. E. Gaspersich

Attachment:  
Sketch of accident area

Sequence for development

3

Roberts

Pinion

Owens

Enlarged detail

3

SKIP

SOUTH

MAINS

NON-FATAL COAL-MINE BUMP ACCIDENT

BEATRICE MINE

BEATRICE POCAHONTAS COMPANY

NEEN MOUNTAIN, BUCHANAN COUNTY, VIRGINIA

July 24, 1976

1" = 100'